



BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING – JANUARY 2016

Meeting. The Board of Corrections met January 8, 2016, in Des Moines. Director Jerry Bartruff updated the Board on significant activities:

- A Justice Reform Round Table was held on November 9, 2015, and reform at the federal level was discussed with a representative from Senator Grassley's office. There is a lot of interest in looking at policies and actions undertaken over time that have led to mass incarceration. Iowa is already doing a lot of things that are being proposed for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, especially in the areas of reentry and recidivism reduction.
- Iowa Prison Industries is exploring the possibility of building low-income modular housing at the Newton Correctional Facility. Discussions have been held with individuals in the housing industry that are supportive of the idea, as lower-income housing is an underserved market.
- All of the wardens are meeting periodically at the different institutions to interact, gain different perspectives, and see the different facilities.
- A legislative coffee was held at the Clarinda Correctional Facility on January 5. Sen. Courtney and Sen. Shipley, legislative staff, and members from the Clarinda community attended.
- A corrections officer was seriously assaulted by an inmate on January 6. The inmate was restrained and placed in administrative segregation. The officer was transported to the regional medical center, treated, and released.
- Steps are being taken to establish a new cost of telephone calls from prisons at 11 cents a minute by March 1, 2016. Currently there is an established cost for a phone call, regardless of the length (up to 20 minutes, the longest period a call can last). This will comply with a recent ruling by the Federal Communications Commission relating to nationwide prison phone call costs.

Apprenticeship Program. There are currently 190 offenders involved with apprentice programs at the correctional facilities, and an additional 29 have graduated. All nine of Iowa's institutions have an apprenticeship program, and there are 16 different programs including cabinet maker, baker, electrician, plumber, materials coordinator, and computer operator. This was started around two years ago, and 17,033 curriculum hours have been recorded.

STAR Program. The Sister's Together Achieving Recovery (STAR) Program is being phased out at the Mitchellville facility. It is a nine-month, peer-based program that is very staff intensive. The results have always been good. Criminal Juvenile and Justice Program staff evaluated the program in 2010, and found the recidivism rate to be lower for participants. However, only 52 women at one time can participate and it was determined to be too costly. There is one last STAR group that will be completing the program in March. A new curriculum of cognitive behavior, that is very action-oriented with role-playing depicting real life situations, is being instituted and is focused on the present and changing risky behaviors.

Workload Work Group. There is a statewide recidivism reduction workload workgroup that will be considering the resource allocations for staff. Rather than focusing on caseloads, the emphasis will be on workload, or the amount of time necessary to complete tasks. The goal is to identify where resources and time should be focused to improve outcomes. Caseload and workload data will be correlated with recidivism data. Over the next six months there will be a workload assessment study, with separate workload formulas developed for Community Cased Corrections (CBCs) facilities and the DOC correctional facilities.

Aging/Mental Illness/Pharmacy Costs. Dr. Harbans Deol discussed the "graying of prisons," a result of increasing chronic diseases and disabilities for inmates. He pointed out that prisons are not built for older populations, but in some instances are becoming like nursing homes. Persons entering prison already tend to be 10 years physiologically older than their actual age. An older population is in need of more

medical devices such as glasses and hearing aids, as well as a larger number of medications. In addition, up to 30.0% of Iowa's prisons inmates are seriously mentally ill. Increasing medical costs will continue to be a long-term trend.

Budget Update. Through the first six months of FY 2016, the DOC is experiencing around a 1.0% deficit, between \$3.0-\$4.0 million.

Legislative Package. Michael Savala stated that there will be a focus on communication and inviting legislators to visit institutions. He is planning on putting out a weekly newsletter with information, as well as position papers which will concentrate on pertinent issues and the best uses of resources.

Public Comments. Dan Homan, President of AFSCME Council #61, stated that there is a concern in some CBCs with officers working night shifts alone. Currently, only random patdowns are performed at the CBCs. There is also a concern that offenders are being released before they are ready.

Next Meeting. The next Board meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2016, in Des Moines. For additional information, see the DOC website: <http://www.doc.state.ia.us/BoardOfCorrections>.

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